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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/759,651	01/16/2004	Jaap De Baan	33474-00007USPT	8049

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EXAMINER

SOTELO, JESUS D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3617

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/759,651

Applicant(s)

BAAN ET AL.

Examiner

Jesús D. Sotelo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4 and 5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 are in the application. Claim 3 has been canceled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Corona.

Corona discloses a catenary anchor leg mooring system including a hollow buoy 16 including a cylindrical hull portion having a center of gravity which is below the sea surface, ballast compartments 90 having a portion below the sea surface and means 50 providing a path for oil to travel from subsea reservoirs. The buoy 16 is adapted to float in a non-submersible condition.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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5. Claims 2, 4, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Corona in view of Grundy et al.

Corona does not disclose the type of ballast used in his chamber at 90. The use of sea water is well known to be used as a ballasting element. Corona actually suggest the use of variable buoyancy compartments and teaches the use of seawater for varying the ballast in the compartments. Grundy discloses a mooring buoy similar to that of Corona, and teaches forming the same with a configuration having a diameter which is greater than twice its height. In view of these disclosures, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to make the buoy of Corona with a configuration having a diameter twice as large as the height of the buoy generally as taught by Grundy. To use seawater as the ballast component 90 in Corona would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one skilled in the art. One of the functions of the ballast 90 in Corona is to stabilize the buoy. It should be noted that the recitation that the ballast compartment is constructed and arranged to “adjust the natural pitch and roll periods of said hollow buoy assembly” is merely a statement of desired functional result. The ballast tank disclosed in Corona will adjust the natural pitch and roll of the buoy as a natural consequence of its location.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 5/19/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's argue that the buoy in the claims is defined as being a “non-submersible” buoy for continuation floatation while the buoy in Corona is clearly submergible. While it is true that the

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buoy of Corona is submersible, this function is one of choice by the operators of the buoy; the buoy of Corona can operate as a non-submersible buoy. Structurally and functionally there is no patentable difference between the two.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jesús D. Sotelo whose telephone number is **571-272-6686**. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. – Fri. 5:30 AM – 2:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Samuel J. Morano can be reached on **571-272-6684**. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jesús D. Sotelo
Jesús D. Sotelo

Primary Examiner

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KNX 03D69 ☺

jds
August 8, 2005